



NORTH DAKOTA
DEPARTMENT *of* HEALTH

NEWS RELEASE

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2005 North Dakota Youth Risk Behavior Survey Released

BISMARCK, N.D. – Several health-related behaviors among North Dakota students in grades nine through 12 have improved, according to the 2005 Youth Risk Behavior Survey (YRBS) released today by the North Dakota Department of Public Instruction and the North Dakota Department of Health.

“The results of this year’s YRBS show some positive changes in behavior by our young people,” said State Health Officer Terry Dwelle, M.D. “While these trends are very encouraging, other behaviors have not improved. We know we still have work to do to help our youth make positive choices to ensure their healthy futures.”

During 2005, North Dakota students in grades nine through 12 were surveyed about behaviors that lead to injuries, tobacco use, alcohol and other drug use, eating habits, physical activity and sexual behaviors. The survey data are used to track risk behavior trends of youth in the state.

The 2005 North Dakota YRBS identified the following behavior trends:

- Improvement shown –
 - Students who had at least one drink of alcohol on one or more of the 30 days prior to the survey decreased from 61 percent in 1995 to 49 percent in 2005.
 - Students who drove a vehicle when they had been drinking alcohol one or more times in the 30 days prior to the survey decreased from 33 percent in 1995 to 22 percent in 2005.
 - Students who smoked cigarettes on one or more of the 30 days prior to the survey decreased from 40 percent in 1995 to 22 percent in 2005.

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- No improvement shown –
 - Students who were overweight increased from 7 percent in 1999 to 11 percent in 2005.
 - Students who ate five or more servings of fruits and vegetables each day during the seven days prior to the survey decreased from 18 percent in 2001 to 14 percent in 2005.

Healthy North Dakota is a statewide initiative that promotes healthy behaviors. According to the initiative's spokesperson, North Dakota First Lady Mikey Hoeven, the goal of *Healthy North Dakota* is to help all North Dakotans, including young people, make healthy lifestyle choices. "I'm encouraged to see that many of our children are making better choices when it comes to alcohol use," Hoeven said. "But we need to keep working so that none of our children are injured or killed because of unfortunate choices such as binge drinking or drinking and driving."

Students in grades seven and eight also participate in the Youth Risk Behavior Survey. Results for these middle school students will be available on the Department of Public Instruction website in December.

"I want to thank the many schools, administrators, faculty members and students who participated in this important survey," said Superintendent of Public Instruction Wayne Sanstead, Ph.D. "The information they provide is invaluable in guiding health and education programs that address risky behaviors. Our goal is healthy, safe students."

The results of the 2005 North Dakota Youth Risk Behavior Survey are available on the Department of Public Instruction website at <http://dpi.state.nd.us/health/YRBS/index.shtm>. For more information, contact Nicole L. Wright, North Dakota Department of Public Instruction, at 701.328.2098.

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